RODRIGUES OTTOLENGUI, 1861–1937

Upon consulting Mathilde M. Carpenter's "Bibliography of Biographies of Entomologists," and finding that, except for a brief anonymous statement in a German entomological periodical in 1937, no adequate biography of Dr. Ottolengui had ever been published in an American entomological journal, no other course was open except to prepare one of this distinguished former member of the New York Entomological Society.

Apparently his first entomological paper was a note on his capture of a single male specimen of the geometrid moth *Brotis vulneraria* in Prospect Park, Brooklyn. This appeared in the Journal of the New York Entomological Society, volume 1, page 91, 1893. At this time Dr. Ottolengui was vice-president of the Society and also a member of the executive committee and the committee on admissions. He continued as a member of the executive committee until 1895 inclusive and again in 1898 and 1900 he was a member of that committee. His next entomological paper appeared in 1902 in the Journal of the New York Entomological Society, volume 10, p. 57–77. This was entitled "Plusia and Allied Genera with Descriptions of New Species." In this paper twelve new species were described and fifty-eight species were illustrated on four plates. In the same issue of that journal, this paper was followed by another by Dr. Ottolengui, on "Notes on Calocampa With a Description of a New Species" p. 77—79, with one plate. Apparently nothing entomological came from him again until seventeen years later when he again published in the Journal of the New York Entomological Society, volume 27, p. 117–126, 1919 "Notes on the Plusiinæ With Descriptions of New Species and Races." This included six new species and races and was illustrated by one plate. In this paper Dr. Ottolengui referred to his 1902 paper and stated that he was working on the data and illustrations for a new complete monograh. For this he had obtained, through the courtesy of Sir George Hampson of the British Museum and with the help of Hampson's artist, drawings in color of the thirty-six types in the British Museum. He

also had other color drawings made for him by Mrs. William Beutenmüller. It was his intention to publish these, but estimates on the cost of reproduction by the 4-color process were prohibitive and so the matter was postponed.

Dr. Ottolengui's active interest in descriptive entomology lasted at least for twenty-six years beginning probably around 1893 when he was thirty-two years old and continuing until 1919 when he was fifty-eight. Twelve years later or in 1931 he gave his "very excellent collection" of Phytometrinæ to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. At the December 15, 1931 meeting of the New York Entomological Society, a statement by Frank E. Watson, in charge of the Museum's collection of Lepidoptera, was read in which it was said that the collection of Phytometrinæ (subfamily of the Noctuidæ), in which Dr. Ottolengui had specialized for so many years, was very complete and world-wide in scope. It contained some 3,300 specimens representing nearly 450 species, including types, paratypes, metatypes and homotypes. A large part of the material was "fresh and beautiful." Accompanying the collection was an album containing 171 hand-colored sketches of types and other rare species. These were the colored drawings, made by Sir George Hampson's artist, and by Mrs. Beutenmüller, to which Dr. Ottolengui had referred in his 1919 paper on the Plusiinæ.

William Beutenmüller (1864–1934), husband of Mrs. Beutenmüller, named a new genus Ottolenguia in a paper entitled "Description of a New Moth" (Jour. N. Y. Ent. Soc., vol. 4, p. 146, 1896). He also described a new species from Florida in the new genus calling it *Ottolenguia reticulina* Beut., (Family Thyrididæ). Unfortunately Beutenmüller's new genus and species turned out to be a synonym of *Hexeris enhydris* Grt., according to J. McDunnough's "Check List of the Lepidoptera of Canada and the United States of America, Part II, Microlepidoptera" (Mem. So. Calif. Acad. Sci., vol. 2, No. 1, 1939) and Beutenmüller's effort to honor his friend was invalidated. However *Autographa arctica* Ottolengui was renamed *Autographa ottolenguii* by Dyar. Of some eighteen new species and varieties described by Ottolengui, fifteen are valid to-day.

Between the ages of thirty-one and thirty-seven, or from 1892 to 1898, Dr. Ottolengui wrote five mystery detective novels. These were all published by G. P. Putnam's Sons of New York City. The first was "An Artist in Crime," 1892. This was followed by "A Conflict of Evidence" in 1893 (347 p.); "A Modern Wizard," 1894 (434 p.); "The Crime of the Century" in 1896 (349 p.), and "Final Proof, or the Value of Evidence" in 1898, (390 p.).* It has been recorded that "An Artist in Crime" was translated into French, German and Polish. According to the Union Catalogue "An Artist in Crime" was translated into Icelandic by Sigtryggur Jonasson and published in Winnipeg in 1900, under the title "Leikinn Glaepamaour." And in 1901 "The Crime of the Century" was also translated by the same person into Icelandic, and published at Winnipeg as "Höfuo-Glaepurinn, Saga."

Dr. Ottolengui's life-long interest however was the practice of dentistry. He was born March 15, 1861 in Charleston, South Carolina. His grandfather Dr. B. A. Rodrigues was a dentist who had studied under Dr. C. Starr Brewster, also of Charleston. His father was Daniel Ottolengui, a newspaper man and playwright and his mother Mrs. Helen Rosalie Rodrigues Ottolengui, was an author. In 1885 when Rodrigues Ottolengui was 24 years old, the degree Master of Dental Surgery was conferred upon him by the University of the State of New York. He studied dentistry under Dr. Norman W. Kingsley of New York City and became his assistant. And early in his career he attracted the attention of Dr. W. A. Atkinson, once the dean of the dental profession. Dr. Kingsley who was a prominent orthodontist and the originator of the best method of treating cleft palates, exacted a promise from Dr. Ottolengui that in return for the methods and techniques taught by Dr. Kingsley, he (Dr. Ottolengui) was to give the treatment to any patient requiring it

* In "Queen's Quorum" (p. 227–288 of "Twentieth Century Detective Stories," ed. by "Ellery Queen," New York. The World Publishing Company, 1948), Ottolengui's "Final Proof" is recorded as one of "the 101 most important books of detective-crime short stories." Mr. "Queen" refers to Dr. Ottolengui as one of the most neglected authors in the history of the detective story and as being unappreciated even in his own time.

regardless of any fee. This was because the majority of the cleft palate patients had little or no money but were worthy of receiving service. Dr. W. A. Atkinson to whom the young Ottolengui sometimes brought his patients for help and advice and whose office was always open for such a purpose, also exacted a promise that as Ottolengui became older he should give his help freely to younger practitioners. Dr. Ottolengui practiced his profession successfully in New York City for fifty years and had an office at 80 West Fortieth Street. He was among the first to sponsor dental research and did much to advance the dental profession. He specialized in several branches especially orthodontia and was among the first to use the X-ray in the dental field. He also made important contributions to pulp canal therapy and cleft palate restorations. In addition dental literature was enriched by his contributions.

In August, 1896 Dr. Ottolengui became editor of "Items of Interest" later changed to "Dental Items of Interest." He continued to edit that journal with distinction and ability for forty-one years, or until the time of his death. Many honors came to him. He was a past president of the Dental Society of the State of New York, of the original Brooklyn Dental Society, of the Second District Dental Society and of the American Society of Orthodontists. He was honored by the Odontographic Society of France and by the Dental Society of Denmark. In 1909 the honorary degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery was conferred upon him by Creighton University (Omaha, Nebraska) and in 1907 Valparaiso University (Valparaiso, Indiana) made him an LL.D., in recognition of his extracurricular activities. In addition he was a Fellow of the American College of Dentists and a past Supreme Grand Master of Delta Sigma Delta.

For twenty-three years Dr. Ottolengui conducted the "round-table" in "Dental Items of Interest," a popular and famous feature of that journal. His last contribution of that sort appeared in the August, 1937 issue (volume 59, No. 8, p. 797–802). In this feature of the journal the leaders of the dentistry profession discussed problems under the able guidance of Dr. Ottolengui. In 1892 his work "Looking Forward (in Dentistry)" was published in Chicago. In 1892, the S. S. White Dental

Manufacturing Company of Philadelphia brought out his "Methods of Filling Teeth: An Exposition of Practical Methods" (200 p. illus.). A second edition was published by White and also by Claudius Ath and Sons, London, in 1899. In 1928 the Dental Items of Interest Publishing Company of Brooklyn, published his "Table Talks on Dentistry" a work of 488 pages with illustrations. During his early years Dr. Ottolengui was active in dental politics. Being a fluent speaker and having a legal type of mind, together with ample courage, his influence in the old National Dental Association was undisputed.

About 1933 Dr. Ottolengui retired from dental practice, but continued to edit "Dental Items of Interest." At the Twentieth Anniversary of the Kings County Dental Society celebrated in 1932 he was acclaimed as an individual "possessing great intellectual attainments, keen and alert to the requirements of organized dentistry," who "through his deliberations and writings dispelled the fears, complexes and misunderstandings with which our profession has been so frequently confronted." In 1935 the Ottolengui Testimonial Committee was organized to elicit a response from the profession in honor of his seventy-fifth birthday. To this, an overwhelming number of congratulatory expressions poured in.

Dr. Ottolengui died on Sunday, July 11, 1937 at his home 175 West Seventy-second Street, New York, of a heart ailment and a stroke after a long illness. According to the obituary in "The New York Times" of July 13, 1937 he was a cousin of the late Count Aguilar, dentist to former King Alfonso of Spain, and of Octavus Roy Cohen, American novelist, short story writer, and author of detective stories. Dr. Ottolengui's wife, Mrs. May Hall Ottolengui had died on July 10, 1936. At the time of his death he was survived by a sister Mrs. Helen Hirsch and a brother Lee Ottolengui, a retired theatrical manager, both of Brooklyn.

In addition to what has been noted, Dr. Ottolengui was an amateur taxidermist, a sculptor, and a photographer of ability. He was a member of the New York Camera Club and won a prize at one of their exhibitions. In an editorial in the "International Journal of Orthodontia and Oral Surgery" for September, 1937,

H. C. P. referred to this gifted and versatile man as "one of those intrepid, enthusiastic, brilliant, personable and outstanding individuals who not only have helped carve out the destiny of American dentistry, but have contributed in no small way to the growth of the lusty infant, orthodontia."

For help received in the preparation of this biography, I wish to express my thanks and appreciation to Mrs. Elise C. Ottolengui of Brooklyn, N. Y., sister-in-law of the late Dr. Ottolengui; Dr. Irving Kraut, Trenton, N. J.; Joseph S. Wade, Washington, D. C., and Lewis M. Stark, The New York Public Library. For the information about Dr. Ottolengui's professional accomplishments, I have drawn freely from H. C. P. author of the editorial in the "International Journal of Orthodontia and Oral Surgery" for September, 1937; and from the accounts by Dr. J. R. Schwartz and Dr. Robert H. Lieberthal, that were published in "Dental Items of Interest" for August, 1937.—HARRY B. WEISS.

PRESERVATION OF FUNGI FOR LABORATORY USE

While making a study of the insect inhabitants of the bracket fungus Polyporus betulinus, it was necessary to bring some of the fungi into the laboratory. Here, however, a problem confronted the experimenter. For rearing the insects, it was necessary to keep the fungi in a fleshy condition and yet avoid the mold which developed if they were kept too moist. The problem was solved by placing the fungi in small plastic bags, such as are used for food storage and home freezing, closed by elastic bands or clamps. Molding was prevented by opening the bags once or twice a week for a few hours. By this method of preservation, fungi can be kept in a good condition for indefinite periods.—EDITH L. MINCH, Graduate student, New York State College for Teachers, Albany, N. Y.